

## **AMENDED PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
January 15, 2002

For Information Contact Public Affairs  
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**PHOENIX, ARIZONA** -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, announced today that Patricia Conception Houser, 61, of Tucson, Arizona, was sentenced to five (5) years probation and ordered to pay \$100,000 in restitution to the Department of Veterans Affairs by United States District Judge Raner C. Collins, in Tucson, Arizona.

On or about May 19, 1962, the Defendant, Patricia Conception Houser, married Duane D. Laures, an active member of the United States Air Force. Duane D. Laures was killed while on active duty status on or about August 22, 1972. On or about September 7, 1972, Patricia Conception Houser applied for and began receiving Dependency and Indemnity Compensation benefits (VA Form 21-534) as the widow of Duane D. Laures.

On or about February 22, 1980, Patricia Conception Houser married Laurence Houser. Patricia Conception Houser having devised a scheme to defraud the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), did not notify the VA *of her marriage to Laurence Houser* so that she would continue receiving Dependency and Indemnity benefits to which she was no longer entitled. The Defendant's scheme to defraud the Department of Veterans Affairs caused Dependency and Indemnity benefits to be paid from on or about February 29, 1980, to on or about June 30, 2000, in the amount of \$155,027.20 to which the Defendant was not entitled.

Patricia Conception Houser entered a plea of guilty on August 30, 2001 to one count of Mail Fraud pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 1341 and agreed to pay \$100,000 in restitution to the Department of Veterans Affairs under the terms of the plea agreement.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of the Inspector General.

The prosecution was handled by Jane L. Westby, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-01-00533-TUC-RCC  
RELEASE NUMBER: 2002-009(2)

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